

Van Dyke (R)

# INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN THE

## PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE,

On Thursday Evening, November 2, 1848.

BY

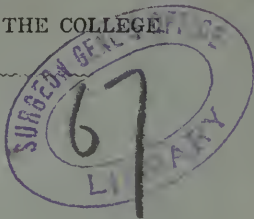
RUSH VAN DYKE, M. D.,

*Professor of Materia Medica and General Therapeutics.*

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PUBLISHED BY THE STUDENTS OF THE COLLEGE.

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PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY JOHN H. GIBON,

NORTH EAST CORNER OF SIXTH AND CHESTNUT STREETS.

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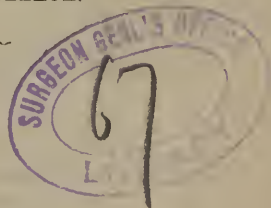
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PROF. RUSH VAN DYKE, M. D.

DEAR SIR,—At a meeting of the Students of the Philadelphia College of Medicine, held in the hall of the institution, November 7th, 1848, Mr. J. J. Steele of South Carolina, was called to the chair, and Mr. G. C. Burg, of Pa., appointed Secretary. On motion, it was unanimously resolved to request a copy of your Introductory Lecture for publication, and the undersigned were appointed a Committee to carry the resolution into effect.

Respectfully yours,

N. RICHARDS MOSELEY, of Penn.,  
J. C. HATHEWAY, of N. B.,  
E. de St. ROMES, of La.,  
JOHN H. ALDAEY, of W. I.,  
L. W. LEIGHTON, of N. H.,  
SAMUEL P. BENNEY, of Md.,  
ALEXANDER C. REED, of Va.,  
GEORGE H. ODELL, of N. H.,  
W. J. BOWDOIN, of Va.,  
DWIGHT RUGGLES, of Mass.,  
R. P. ROBSON, of Ind.,  
WM. K. CAMPBELL, of Penn.,  
J. H. TUCKER, of S. C.

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No. 26 Montgomery Square, Race and Eleventh Streets,  
November 11th, 1848.

GENTLEMEN:

In answer to the polite and flattering request made through you by the Students of the Philadelphia College of Medicine, I place at their disposal the Introductory Lecture which I had the honor of delivering to them on the evening of the 2nd inst.

I have to regret that as a composition, it is not more worthy of their acceptance, or of publication in their name. In this respect I feel some hesitation in consenting to its submission to public perusal; but supposing that the desire to publish, originates in the importance which you and your fellow-Students have attached to the *topics* of the Lecture, the same motives which induced me to select them as its subject, together with my desire in all things, as far as I possibly can, to comply with the wishes of those, who have greeted me on my accession to my chair, with so kind a reception, prevent my withholding it.

Be pleased, gentlemen, to accept for yourselves and for those you represent, impressions of how *much* I am, in reciprocation of all your kindness,

Very respectfully and truly,

Your friend and servant,

RUSH VAN DYKE.

To Messrs. N. RICHARDS MOSELEY,

J. C. HATHEWAY, and others,

Committee.

# LECTURE.

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GENTLEMEN:

The ample opportunities afforded by Philadelphia, for the acquisition of medical knowledge, has again attracted her annual hundreds of the votaries of the healing art. And echo, raising loud her voice above the hum of the busy professional scene, by which we are surrounded, in strains not to be misunderstood, from British Provinces in the North-East, to the Crescent City, pride of the sunny South, from Atlantic Isles, to the far distant West, *repeats* the joyous notes, which, through Fame's loud trumpet proclaim the fact, that Philadelphia College of Medicine has successfully asserted her claim, to that equal share of attention to which her ample privileges and arrangements entitle her.

In facilities and capacity for instruction, in all that appertains to the profession of your choice we feel, gentlemen, that we stand on common ground, with the most favored of the institutions by which we are surrounded; and if *success* is any criterion of merit—the *size of classes* any evidence of the amount of consideration to which we may justly lay claim—then may we safely leave you, to any inference you may please to draw, from the fact, that already, in the very short period of her existence, Philadelphia College of Medicine has distanced two older schools, who called themselves highly respectable, and who almost ranked themselves as the competitors of the time-honored University and her showy rival in Tenth street. *Twelve* months, gentlemen, had scarcely elapsed after the delivery of the first lecture in this hall, ere this institution presented its Faculty an opportunity of lecturing to the third largest class of medical students in Philadelphia. This fact alone speaks volumes for its vital force and energy.

From the moment at which I first heard of the application of this College for legislative acknowledgement, and the privileges and immunities of an act of incorporation, I felt anxious for the passage of its charter. I felt so, because *in* its passage, was involved the further development of a policy of public medical instruction, in *which*, as a member of the profession, I felt interested, and *to* which the General Assembly of this Commonwealth had but lately given its sanction.

That policy may now be considered as established. The aristocracy of medical learning, so to speak, no longer exists in Pennsylvania. The monopoly of privilege in medical instruction is broken down. The avenues to "high place and position," as they are called, are thrown open and converted into great professional highways, upon which, every one who feels himself provided and competent for a journey, may freely travel at his own good pleasure. The times have passed away in which the Commonwealth seemed to regard the profession as such a Gomorrah of incapacity, that scarce seven men could be found within its limits, endowed with talents to teach the mysteries of our art. The day is ended in which only every third generation could expect to be represented in professional stations, and when even from *its* ranks only those whom age and the trials of a long and severe probation of professional labor, had almost rendered physically unable for the task, were supposed to be competent to fill the chair of instruction.

The aspirant for such honorable distinction, has *now* an opportunity of grasping the object of his ambition, while the pulse of life still beats warmly in his breast, while his mind is yet vigorously active, his perceptions vivid, the recollection of the deficiencies of the system of instruction of which he was a pupil, and the inconveniences they occasioned him at the outset of his career, fresh in his memory, while his physical strength is yet able to support him, under all the labor of body and mind, requisite for the full, faithful and conscientious performance of his duties.

I have often heard it said, that if a man has not mastered the institutions of his art and calling at thirty, his mental capital will never pay a dividend; and that, if at thirty-five he has not learned to systematise and communicate his knowledge, he will never acquire the faculty of doing so! How many more would address their minds to severer study, and task it to greater acquisitions, during the first eight or ten years of their professional career—how many more would discipline their powers of ratiocination, and devote their leisure, during the first fifteen years of their professional life, to the arrangement of their traditinary knowledge and the rich contributions of their own observation and experience, in a tangible form, were it not for the utter hopelessness of finding an investment for their capital, or objects upon which to spend the accumulations of their industry!

I would not appeal to selfishness in the matter! I would interest only the manly pride of an high minded and honorable body!—but I must say, that it remains for you, gentlemen, and your peers, and for the profession to determine, whether this change of legislative policy, which, after a struggle of twenty years, has been finally established, shall be sustained.

Who in 1776 thought that America would produce another Cincinnatus? Who believed in 1792 that the glory of Cæsar, the greatest of ancient heroes, and the renown of Alexander, would be eclipsed upon the plains of Italy, by an adventurer from Corsica? Who, ten months ago, imagined that wild, restless, discontented, ambitious France would produce a rival of Cicero, or the exemplar of a second Washington?

The change of policy to which I have alluded, may leave a lesser charm attached to a diploma, but can only do so temporarily! While in the meantime it will show the world how many Cullens, Physicks, Wistars, and (I was about to say) *Rushs*, have lived and died unhonored and unknown, under an opposite state of things. And yet *he*, whose name I was about to mention without special notice, but could not so pass by! *he*, who was the chiefest among those whose labors have made the air of Philadelphia an atmosphere of medical science! *he* whose wife was medicine till his thirty-second year, whose mistress science, whose companion books, whose study the grave! *he* who the talented Ramsay in his eulogium called the ascended Elijah of the University, *that great man* whose eminence it would require hours to portray, became a professor at the early age of twenty-four. Who can say that his eminence would have been as great had he been called *less* early to public professional life? Upon whom of those, who since his time have, at more advanced periods of life, been called to professional stations, in answer to Ramsay's prayer, has his mantle fallen? I will not trust myself to say upon whom it has *not* fallen! but if Ramsay perchance was not so righteous that his prayers might much avail—upon whom *might* it have fallen? Time may yet enable us to approximate the number of those who might have borne it, who have passed, or will full soon have passed, across the stage of life unnoticed and unknown, when the ample development of a better policy shall have given full and proper scope to the talents and honorably ambitious hopes of "the young profession."



The change may leave temporarily less of prestige attached to the names of those who grant medical degrees! The truly ingenuous mind, rests its claims to consideration and influence, solely upon *intrinsic* worth, and such should be your motto, gentlemen, even as it is the device of Philadelphia College. But if you value the letter-patent, that shall accredit your claim to the title of Doctor in Medicine, as much for the source whence it emanates, as for the acquirements it may bespeak of you, it is to the *future* you should look; for all prestige has its endings and successions.

Who *now* can say *who* will be the cynosure of American Medicine, when some few years hence, the scythe of time shall have gathered the high and haughty aristocrats of genius of the present hour, into his garner. *Perhaps*, gentlemen, *that same* institution, among those you are now thinking of, which may have been lately represented to you as "the very dog's tail of them all!"

It is for you to decide the question! It is for you to fix the cape-stone in its place, upon the temple we have erected for you, and when the splendid finish of the coping, shall in future years arrest your sight, you can point with pride and pleasure, to our glittering dome and say, I and my companions did it—our smiles cheered the weary laborers on—our countenance shielded and protected them, against the pitiless peltings of the storms that beset the pathway of their early progress.

Your presence and approbation are the cape-stone we require. The coping—we will be personally responsible for. The only point for you to decide is, whether, to use a medico-legal term, Philadelphia College is viable—whether it is capable of supporting the existence it has assumed?

To this point I reduced my decision when some two months ago, I occupied a position in regard to it parallel with yours—and with as great, if not a greater, interest at stake than yours. A calm, dispassionate observer of the progress of this College since its first organization, I have been surprised at the indefatigable zeal and energy which have characterized its movements, and the wonderful extent, to which in so short a period, it has carried its arrangements for medical instruction! In all the details of an institution, it has accomplished more in one year, than any other medical school, whose history belongs to Philadelphia, ever before has done in ten years. Had not the past been to me a sound reliable assurance of capacity for future success and greatness, I had not been here this evening to testify to you concerning the estimation in which this Philadelphia College is held, and the prospect—predicated upon the untiring zeal, and persevering industry, and effective energy it has already exhibited—of future usefulness and fame, which confessedly in public opinion, are supposed to lie before it. Had not such been the result of my reflections and inquiries, I had not stood here on this occasion, a voluntary witness between it and you. As it is, I say to you, gentlemen,—you cannot choose your lot, for a better or a prouder professional future, than that which in all human probability, will be connected with the registry of your names, at this Philadelphia College of Medicine.

As regards *ourselves*, all the great obstacles to success in an undertaking like this, have been surmounted. A commodious and comfortable building is all our own—the grand essentials of instruction are all provided—and all the luxuries of demonstrative courses are being superadded, as opportunities from time to time occur, from the ample means at our command. Under such circumstances, you may rest assured, that the word "fail" for *us* has no existence, whatever may be the representations to the contrary of those whose interest or malicious pleasure it may be, to say all manner of things against us falsely. They may call us quarrelsome fellows—a house divided

against itself which cannot stand ! They may continue as they have begun to call us by any hard names they please ! They may even call in question our capacity and means for instruction ! They may say we are *not respectable*, and refuse to take our students *ad eundem* ! This last will disturb us least, for it is the fashion of the place,—and we little fear that any one who spends one session with us, will wish to spend his next elsewhere, at least any one who is capable of appreciating instruction, or of being satisfied any where. But to show that regard for science or the dignity of the profession, has nothing to do with this decision upon the *respectability* of an institution, it may be stated, that the students of an institution “whose faculty shall not exceed three professors, located in an obscure corner, remote from hospitals and libraries, where the unwonted sound of academical applause might almost startle the dun deer from its noon-day repose on the skirts of the primeval forests,—whose terms of tuition are such as place the doctorate within the reach of all whose means supply the ordinary wants of nature, whose announcement of collegiate fees to prevent mistakes, includes the cost of *board* not only, but also all the repair and cleansing of garments,”—the students of such a school as this may be admitted *ad eundem*—but each College in Philadelphia refuses *so* to receive the students of any other incorporated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Juxtaposition with talents even of ordinary character creates jealousy and envy in minds of men who feel the weakness of the tenure by which they occupy their places. But let envy, jealousy or spleen, as the case may be, exhaust themselves. “There is one lesson we have learned by experience, and we would impress it upon your minds. It is this—that if you have only by diligence and attention to your studies, qualified yourself for the duties of your profession, neither slander nor misrepresentation can prevent your success. When therefore you hear that you have been traduced, when your skill and ability are belied or called into question, do not allow your tempers to be irritated,”—define your position in the light of truth, which must in its might ultimately prevail, and leave the rest to a candid, a liberal and intelligent public, who will most assuredly render you in the end a righteous verdict in the premises.

We shall extend to the students of the schools by which we are surrounded, the *ad eundem* courtesy denied by them to ours, in a spirit of charity and forgiveness of intent to injure, and endeavouring to preserve peace with all “men of good will,” are determined to devote ourselves assiduously to the duties we have assumed; and, “to pursue steadily the great object we have at heart, namely; to place Philadelphia College of Medicine, among the first Institutions of this or any other country, and to allow neither calumny nor misrepresentation unnecessarily to disturb our equanimity, or betray us into false positions. We feel the inherent strength of our school, and know that nothing can arrest its career, nor even impede its triumphant progress.” We present you then, in this place, the bounteous spring of knowledge, and invite you to partake of its vivifying streams, with all the honors accompanying the draught, on terms the most liberal that could be offered, consistently with a just appreciation of the professional and public interests involved in your admission to the doctorate, and a just regard for your future reputation and success, so far as it may be in our power to promote them. In order to enable us to do this more effectually, our charter confers upon us a privilege and immunity, not contained in the charter of any, even the most favored College in our country. While the same honors attach to our diploma, as to that of the oldest school, we have the express power of passing a candidate through the two courses which custom has



rendered requisite for graduation, in half the time that other institutions occupy. In so doing we in no wise shorten the period of study usually required, nor in any manner lower the standard of qualifications for a degree.

The first prerequisite for the Doctorate is, that the candidate shall have been engaged in the study of medicine, during a period of three years.

The second, that he shall have attended two full courses of lectures, one of which shall have been in this College.

The third, that he shall have been the private pupil of some reputable practitioner for the space of two years.

The fourth, that he shall prepare and maintain a thesis upon some subject connected with the science of medicine.

The fifth, that he shall satisfactorily pass such examination as may be required of him—

*Then*, if he present a reeommendatory letter from his preeptor, and his deportment and charaeter are such as becomes a scholar and a gentleman, he is admitted to his degree. These are the rules of *respectable* institutions in our country, and at no one of them all, are greater prerequisites demanded; while in common with all other institutions, in cases of unusual industry and extraordinary application and aptitude, we are willing to make any reasonable advancement of the candidate, which a just, honorable and conscientious regard for the various interests at stake in his passage to a degree, will permit.

Add to this consideration the fact that in two years Philadelphia College repeats four courses of lectures in place of two; and the preponderance of advantages on the score of time, money, and amount of instruction to the *student*, is vastly in favor of his matriculation, in an institution, whose assiduity and unwearying diligence in teaching, are but symbols of the untiring industry *he* should manifest, in the use of the means of instruction placed at his command.

But on this topic I will not enlarge, lest I be thought to attach too much importance to mere ceremonials. In all matters appertaining to the Doctorate, Philadelphia College of Medicine occupies the *only* "platform," which the common sense, the sober second thought of an high minded and intelligent class can approve.

We look less to mere compliance with *forms*, than to the fulfilment of *scientific* requirements; we ask not for catalogues of books which have been *read*, but we look for assiduity and *knowledge*: we ask not how long and regularly a candidate has *listened*, we ask what he has *learned*. The claims of our Alumni to the honors of the school, are founded, first upon knowledge, besides which we require nothing, save a reputation for the observance of those proprieties of life, which the laws of honor require, and which are essential to the character of a gentleman. We wish the title of M. D. obtained from us to signify to the world, (and it is the signification we intend it shall bear despite all that may be said of us by those and the friends of those *whom our rigid adherence to the rule may have disappointed*;) that he who possesses it is both *professionally* a scholar, and *personally* a gentleman.

In meeting you on this occasion, I could not refrain from making some allusion, to the institution in which I esteem it my good fortune, to occupy the chair of General Therapeutics and the Materia Medica. It becomes me not however to occupy the entire space of time allotted to this interview, with such a topic. You naturally expect that I should make some reference to the position assigned me as the occupant of that chair, and to the

course I intend to pursue in the lectures I shall deliver during the session. I will ask your attention while I briefly do so.

The wonderful structure of the organism which is to be the subject of your future professional study and care; the functions of the various organs of which it is composed, and the manner in which their uses contribute to the living condition of man; the doctrine of the reproduction of our species, and the proper manner of our advent and introduction into the world, with the topics incident to and connected therewith; the laws by the observance of which health may be preserved; the ætiology, semiology and laws of morbid action in all its protean forms; the methods by which particular diseases may be remedied, and health when lost by their access re-established; with the rules by which you should be governed in the performance of your clinical duties; will be presented, explained, and illustrated in *other* departments of the course of lectures upon which you are about to enter.

As you make your curriculum of attendance you will observe that one portion of the topics which will be thus presented is theoretical, the other practical: the one furnishing you the basis of your knowledge, the other affording you a view of the opinions prevailing in the profession in relation to the most appropriate means of attaining the objects of the practitioner of the healing art.

In the practical departments you will, as you advance, observe that the *surgeon* and *obstetrician*, *pari passu*, as they discover to you the various circumstances under which the great enemy of our common humanity, death, will offer himself for combat with your skill in *their* departments of the art, will place in your hands the weapons and appliances with which you should be provided for the encounter, and explain to you their uses; while in the *practical department proper of medicine*, which teaches the doctrine of the management of diseases that do not require manual or instrumental interference—so voluminous are the accumulations of centuries of observation and experience, that a subdivision of labor, hath, from time to time which the memory of man reacheth not, been found necessary.

The doctrine of the management of disease has been divided into general and special Therapeutics. To the former is assigned the exposition of the *modus operandi* of medicines, and the indications they are capable of fulfilling with such peculiarities as belong to them individually. The latter instructs you how and when those indications are requisite and proper in the treatment of particular diseases. The pathology of particular diseases and their therapeia is confided to the professorship of the practice of medicine. The general principles of medicinal administration are embodied in the department of General Therapeutics and confided to a separate chair which is further charged with the duty of presenting under the title of the *Materia Medica* an outline of the physical, commercial and medicinal history of each particular article used in the practice of your art. In the former of these chairs medicines are spoken of only so far as regards their value in particular varieties of disease. In the latter they are the subjects of minute physical description, and their actions and effects of a thorough individual investigation. In providing materials for a course of instruction in the *Materia Medica* and General Therapeutics we gather the results produced by the administration of particular remedies as they are scattered over the surface of the history of the treatment of thousands of cases differing from each other in their pathogeny and medicinal requirements, and embody them under appropriate heads—to the effect that its teachings are a resumer of the clinical observations and experience of the professor in the uses and effects of remedies. And this is the key to the position you occupy as

members of a class attending these two courses of instruction. When you enter the room of Practice you will find that the professor presupposes you acquainted with the history and properties of the various agents of which he speaks as remedies. When you pass to the Materia Medica and Therapeutics room you will find that you are presumed to be familiar with the phenomena of disease, and to understand their pathogeny and indications of cure. By a due appreciation of your position as thus defined you will be able readily to harmonize the teachings of the two chairs and blend them into a systematic whole.

Connected with the discussion of the powers of the Materia Medica, are the general operations to which medicines are subjected in preparing or combining them for administration as remedies, constituting Pharmacy. These have been as fully explained to you as time would permit, or your necessities as practitioners will probably demand in our preliminary October interviews.

Again, the powers of medicines reside sometimes in the entire matter composing them, sometimes in an active principle which can be insulated, and in the separate form be employed to better advantages than in combination with the other portions of the medicament from which it has been extracted. Medicines moreover, when united, are liable to react upon one another, and by this means to suffer an alteration of properties giving rise to the necessity of a strict attention to, and knowledge of their chemical habitudes. The analysis of their constituent principles and the chemical history of medicines, and the production of new compounds of them unknown to nature by means of art, is the province of Pharmaceutic Chemistry. As however the analysis of bodies in *all* their varieties is a topic of great interest, and forms a connecting link between our science and other departments of natural philosophy, the information which it is necessary for you to possess on these topics is assigned to the chair of Chemistry, and will be found each topic in its proper place in the interesting and valuable lectures which will be delivered to you by your professor in that department. In this connection, it will belong to me only to explain the modifications of Therapeutic power which medicines undergo under such circumstances, namely—the properties of the compounds so formed, the action of the active principles so separated, and the clinical advantages thus conferred by the application of the Chemist's art to the purposes of the Materia Medica.

In the nice, accurate, and satisfactory accomplishment of the duties thus assigned to him, your professor of Materia Medica and Therapeutics, has some difficulties to contend with, to one of which he would direct your attention on this occasion; and he would present it in connection with an objection which has been made to the division of instruction which has been just described. Some learned writer has proposed that the physical history of drugs and medicines should be united to Chemistry and Botany, and cease to exist separately under the title of the Materia Medica; that the *general* views of the Materia Medica should remain united with general Therapeia, “which is the philosophic rationale of all practical medicine,” and that this latter should absorb the now practical portion of special Therapeutics whose theory should be united to physiology, pathology, and the clinical course; an arrangement which I am inclined to believe exists at least virtually in Germany.

To this proposition the director of public instruction might at first sight answer, that it makes very little difference which plan is adopted, since the *same*, and the same *amount* of information will be imparted under either arrangement; and if the suggestion were founded upon nothing more



than the fancied convenience of a new arrangement, the reply would be all sufficient.

Be not hasty to pronounce a novelty absurd. Cicero has said *nihil tam absurde dici potest quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum*. This may be very true, but may not the philosopher claim a moment's patient hearing under the converse, that a philosopher can scarcely advance any thing, however absurd, *prima facie*, which is entirely devoid of point or meaning.

Such is the case in regard to the proposition before us: the reasons assigned for it come in the form of a severe criticism upon *Materia Medica* courses. I allude to them because I am a believer in that writing which saith, "blessed are they that hear their own detractions that they may put them to mending." Being avaricious of all that comes in the form of a blessing, I shall not turn a deaf ear to any well-founded criticism, the more particularly when the means of correcting the fault are so easily applied as in the present case.

The reasons alluded to are, first, that no classification that has ever been proposed in any systematic work on the *Materia Medica* has fulfilled the requirements of rational medicine; and second, that *Materia Medica* authors by affixing absolute properties to medicines and regular doses, and settled rules of administration, have indirectly encouraged empiricism, by placing it in the power of ignorant pretenders under easy rules of procedure to apply medicines as specifics, and to quote the authority of the profession for so doing, in this way converting means of invaluable blessings into instruments of evil to the cause of public health and happiness. To whatever is just and well-founded in these remarks we may add thirdly, that it encourages symptomatology, a doctrine which although followed by the great mass of the common laborers of the profession, is delusive and injurious wherever it is made the therapeia of our art, whether it be practised in the name of Hahnemann or Hippocrates, of Homeopathy or Enantiopathy, (but this third point we shall not be able to touch in *this* lecture.) There is however no necessary connection existing between our plans of Medical teaching and the evils complained of. Every evil has of course its origin in error, but there must needs always be a connecting link between the cause and the effect which gives its agency an influence. This is the case alike in the intellectual, the social, and the moral world; and that connecting link is found in some defect of character, some deficiency of intelligence, or some social institution, of which selfishness and cupidity may take advantage. There is no necessary connection between the works of *Materia Medica* authors, and the existence of empiricism or quackery. I apprehend they have no more connection with the evils in question, than the administration of an homeopathic pellet has with the cure of a patient who recovers from an attack of phrenitis. If any connection exists between them and professional works, it is with the dispensatories and formularies which the misconception of the public in regard to the legitimate objects and proper limits of the functions of the apothecary, and the submission of the profession to his encroachments have rendered necessary, and even excusable. Topics which used to be learned in the office of the preceptor, or be taught orally in lectures, or if printed were not published in the vernacular, are now by the abolishment of doctor-shops entrusted to a class of men whose sympathies are rather against than with the profession; whose business is not regulated by law, whose assumptions are in no wise restricted, whose proper sphere is in no wise duly appreciated by the public; and it is rather a protection to the public that their ignorance should be enlightened by works written by the profession for their instruction though absolute properties are affixed, and that their rashness should be restrained

by the assignment of regular doses. There is doubtless an error of judgment on the part of the profession in this, they forget that while they attempt to assume the stateliness of the M. D. of aristocratic England, where the title is only honorary or obtained by purchase at a price the mass of practitioners cannot afford, that the apothecary will naturally endeavor to usurp here the same relative position that his title commands in England. The republican tone of all our institutions is at variance with the idea of distinctions in the ranks of the profession here, so that while the profession is amusing *itself* with a fancied resemblance between their position and that of the *Doctors* in Medicine of the mother country, they are virtually permitting the elevation to a level with themselves of men who have no claim to the decillionth part of the qualifications required for a degree at apothecary's hall, and are actually providing designing men, the most effectual and powerful means of carrying their plans into execution. I know there are those who honorably practice their art, and steadily refuse to exercise any functions which do not legitimately belong to their calling, but their number is small, while the other class is legion. The regular graduate in pharmacy who observes the ethics of his corps needs but his pharmacœpeia, his botany, his chemistry. It is only to him who requires a mask for his effrontery that the scientific veneer which a formulary affords, is necessary. To the medical graduate who has properly learned and understood the institutions of his art, no mechanical appliances are needful; if he refers to a dispensatory it is for any thing rather than a dose or the virtue of a drug.

So far as the consequences of such error fall upon the profession, it is a matter which intimately concerns us, but in the consideration of which I doubt me if the public would much interest itself. Whatever sympathy might by peradventure be excited in their mind in relation to it could be easily overcome through an appeal to Buncombe by those interested to the contrary. Their influence is extensive because their prejudices and prepossessions harmonize with the mass of the people. And the people are unable on account of their want of general information on medical subjects, to form a correct judgment in the premises. It would be idle then, to name this view of the subject, were it not that the public interest in the matter cannot be effectually protected against the evils and dangers of *Incompetency* by any amount of information which the profession could possibly disseminate through myriads of dispensatories; for it is not an acquaintance with *Materia Medica* alone, and the names of symptoms that can qualify a man for the practice of our complicated and intricate art. In reality the public have a larger interest at stake in this matter than the profession. So far as the evil consequences of this state of things extend only to the exposure of the sick to the danger of employing an incompetent medical adviser, and of becoming the victims of empiricism, they may be guarded against by the exercise of prudential caution in the choice of a physician. But the injurious effects of unrestricted competition arising from the want of a proper regulation by municipal authority of matters pertaining to the administration of medicine, extend to the articles of the *Materia Medica* themselves, and thus vitiate the practice of medicine in the hands of regular and competent practitioners. Every patient confidently expects to have the best medicine given him, and his recovery depends even more upon the genuineness and purity of the medicine furnished him, when the treatment of his case is confided to the most eminent, than when entrusted to the most incompetent medical attendant or empiric. German cities suffer less in this respect than we do; because there the administration of medicine is regulated by law, and the exercise of the functions of all concerned in it are restricted within their



legitimate limits by adequate penal enactments; while here the trade, and it is truly a *trade*, is free alike to gentle and simple, to the learned and the unlearned. In Germany strict sanitary regulations, and an efficient medical police prevents the establishment of a drug store, by any person not possessed of the knowledge required for so important an occupation. A strict examination in chemistry, pharmacy, botany, and mineralogy must be passed before the business can be engaged in, and even then the graduate cannot open a new one: he is limited to the purchase of a privileged establishment, because their number is limited according to population; for such is the extent to which they must be furnished with medicines, and such the standard of purity with which the articles must compare, that no profit upon them could save the proprietor harmless, if his custom was not made as unlimited as it is. The value of a drug store in Berlin, including license which attaches to the building—for public convenience demands permanence in their location—is from twenty to eighty thousand dollars, and but one for every ten thousand inhabitants exists; while here every second or third square has a store, and eight if not nine in every ten of them all could be fitted up with all their gilding, at from eight hundred to two thousand dollars. The effect is, that in Germany both physician and patient can rely upon the genuineness of their medicines; while here but little confidence can be placed in them. We have some very able and distinguished pharmacopolists, but the most ignorant and incompetent persons can successfully compete with them. We have many who in strict compliance with their ethical code, confine themselves rigidly to the exclusive exercise of their proper functions, who conscientiously endeavor to furnish none but pure and genuine drugs, but they are few and far between: the mass of the people sympathize most with those who will furnish advice however injudicious and worthless, and medicine at one cost, or who will put a prescription at the lowest rate; and their efforts to fulfil the requirements of the profession, and the sick are entirely dependent upon the druggist who is even more at the mercy of competition than the pharmacist. Such persons are in every way worthy of patronage, but if they persist in practising their art honestly, for the accommodation of the few persons of intelligence who value their constitutions more than their purses, and keep a well provided stock of good drugs in a variety sufficient to meet the exigencies of the profession, they must do so at the risk of a large annual loss, against which the limited patronage they of necessity must individually receive cannot indemnify them: and competition at last must oblige them to look at cost before quality, and to value their daily bread more than their art, for their moral honesty is not implicated; the profit in the aggregate amounts to no more on the spurious than on the genuine drug, yet such is the blindness of the mass of the people, that there are no bounds to the impositions to which their own shortsightedness subjects them, except those which limit the elasticity of the apothecary's conscience, or his greater economy in living compared with another.

The expense of labor put upon drugs is as great according to its amount as of that put upon any other staple, and should enhance its value in a similar proportion. Yet a compound medicine may often be bought at a less price than one of its ingredients would cost if it were good; pulverized drugs are very apt to sell for less than the price of the crude article; and the variety of prices at which the most important drugs are constantly sold, raises a reasonable doubt whether any of them, even at the highest price asked, is the genuine article.

These things embarrass and enhance the labor of your professor of *Materia Medica*. He can scarcely present a specimen which compares with the

standards laid down. This is a minor difficulty compared with that of reconciling authorities in their representation of the value of drugs in the treatment of disease. Cullen will highly recommend musk and castor in the treatment of spasmodic and nervous diseases. Coxe will say they are obsolete. Bigelow treats of them as superfluous. And your most voluminous of more modern dispensaries will not extricate you from the dilemma.

The want of good medicines in one country, moreover, is frequently the reason why the experience of the profession in another is lost or laughed at. We prescribe the musk and castor of our market in the doses recommended or prescribed for its use in Europe, and without effect. We presume that we use the same article because we are led to believe so by the statements of those interested. But the fact that on the continent of Europe musk and castor cost more than their weight in gold, while here a lady can purchase the former to perfume her handkerchief at two or three cents a grain, shows conclusively that we have not the genuine article, independent of the fact that many, *very* many of our drug-houses are furnished with musk procured from rats caught in the ditches that drain the low grounds along the Delaware and Chesapeake.

And when it recurs to his mind that many of you will locate yourselves far from the Atlantic border, the embarrassment such a state of things causes the teacher of the *Materia Medica* is in no wise lessened when he reflects that the medicines which go hence are inferior to those which present themselves to his criticism here. I heard some few days ago of the case of a man near Wilkesbarre, who had shortly before taken for the cure of his intermittent no less than one hundred and thirty-five grains of Sulphate of Quinine in a pint of brandy, in divided doses in the course of twenty-four hours; having previously taken the largest doses that the faculty had dared to order him without effect. He in this way cured himself, and suffered no extraordinary inconvenience in doing so except such as might be produced from an active dose of any common cathartic.

Interminable almost is the catalogue of adulterations, and of the fallibilities of medicines and their preparations. Almost impossible is it to affix their doses. Incalculable the disadvantage of such a state of things to the public, when the physician prescribes upon the basis of the genuine article. Highly necessary to the physician whose prescriptions are prepared any where except in his own office, is a knowledge of these matters.

It is far less to systematize writers on the subject of my course that we should attribute any encouragement of so dangerous a state of things, than to the misconceptions of the public respecting medical science and professional arrangements, and to a class of works which has been made necessary by the toleration granted by the public to the free and unrestrained growth of a system that has entailed these evils upon it and the profession.

Against the difficulties which this and other similar causes of practical embarrassment shall cause you, it shall be our object to provide you. And in so doing shall endeavor to furnish you precepts by the observance of which you will be enabled safely to *think for yourselves* alike in relation to your reasons for prescribing medicines, and as to the doses in which you will exhibit them. And you may rely upon it that your only security against failure in any circumstance of difficulty, is to be able confidently to think for yourself. And if the education you receive shall not enable you safely so to do, it will have failed of its only legitimate end. And here, gentlemen, I would not be misunderstood, I do not wish to "puff you up with the artificial delusion" that any man is sufficient unto himself in our science or our art, or that he can become so. The science of medicine is a natural

science, and there is no inspiration, no moving of the spirit in it, no peculiar grace imparted by nature to even the seventh son of a seventh son. Our art is strictly practical and has its laws, and you must learn them, and you must observe them in practice, ever bearing in mind that you cannot violate them without endangering life and incurring a heavy weight of responsibility to your profession, to society, and to a power quicker to discern error and mightier to condemn than any temporal sovereignty. In recommending you to think for yourselves, and to submit to the touchstone of your own reason the views of even the greatest masters, I do not wish to make you pragmatistical, or to inspire you with that contempt or jealousy of your brethren which is the great opprobrium of your profession. I do not wish you to direct your ambition to the invention of new theories or systems of medicine, be the amount of genius you could display in so doing what it might. I would not have you buried in the tomb of the ephemeral glory of those who have preceded you in the pathway of such perishable fame. Neither would I relieve you from the burden of the constant study and investigation which our long art requires of those who would excel in it. But I would encourage that freshness, vigor and independence of thought which alone can enable you to approach the examination and undertake the treatment of a new case, with the confidence and composure which are alike essential to your own success and to the safety of your patients: for in medicine, as in law, every case is to be decided on its own merits. I would only leave your minds as free and illimitable, as unfettered by authority in learning and in science as your souls and bodies are free in this land of light, liberty and happiness, from the religious or political interference of civil despotism. I would only encourage that energy and freedom of thought, which in times past have successively relieved our science from the *epicureanism* of Asclepiades, the *mechanical philosophy* of Themison and Thessalus, and the younger Boerhaave, the *To ενοπριον* of Hippocrates, the *nature* of Sydenham, the *aura vitalis* of Van Helmont, the *vis medicatrix* of Gaubius, the *anima medica* of Stahl and Nichols, the *vital principle* of Barthez, the *impetum faciens* of Kaul Boerhaave, the spasm, excitement and collapse of Cullen, the debility of Brown, the antiphlogiston of the gastricists, and the abstractions of Darwin, and which is yet destined to elevate it in its principles to the platform of demonstrable truths. I would encourage that firmness and decision, that steady, calm, and innervated boldness, which regarding neither similia-similibus, contraria-contrarius, nor counter-irritation makes use of all the means which an all bountiful Providence has placed in its hands to combat and conquer disease or postpone the dark hour of final trial—unprejudiced by authority, uninfluenced by theory, undismayed by the fallacies of mere experience; which uses all those means in their proper places, in the doses suited to the circumstances of the case; which is guided only by the conclusions of an unbiassed ratiocination—begun, continued, and ended in that true eclectic disposition of mind which takes *all pathies* for what they are worth, and candidly allowing to each its due share of credit, renders them all subservient to the purposes of rational medicine, to the confusion, vexation, and dismay of the theorist, charlatan and empiric. And I would effect this so far as it may belong to the province of my chair, by teaching you my branch in such a way as will most effectually oblige you to think for yourselves on all medical subjects without imposing upon you the necessity of an effort disproportioned to the capabilities of minds as yet comparatively or entirely unpracticed in the task. In making this object a mark of high emprise in my method of treating the subject confided to me, I am happy to find that I shall be pursuing the pathway of safe precedent established in my chair by my dis-

tinguished predecessor—the present President of our College. I shall prosecute my course, with some modifications, according to the sound, scientific, and eminently practical method pursued by him, and for the institution of which I am deeply indebted to him.

As the hour allotted for this interview is exhausted, I shall be obliged to postpone the exposition of my method until the opening lecture of the course, until which time permit me to remain your debtor for the kind, patient and polite attention, and for the numerous and goodly presence with which you have honored me on this occasion.



# PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE,

## FIFTH, SOUTH OF WALNUT STREET.

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The Regular Summer Course of instruction will be commenced about the 12th of March, 1849, and be continued four months, by the following faculty:

Anatomy, - - - - -	{ JAMES McCLINTOCK, M. D.
Materia Medica and Therapeutics, - - - - -	{ S. R. McCLINTOCK, M. D., Adj. Prof.
Institutes of Medicine and Medical Jurisprudence, -	RUSH VAN DYKE, M. D.
Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children, -	CHRISTOPHER C. COX, M. D.
Chemistry, - - - - -	CHARLES A. SAVORY, M. D.
Surgery, - - - - -	A. L. KENNEDY, M. D.
Comparative Anatomy, - - - - -	JAMES McCLINTOCK, M. D.
Theory and Practice, - - - - -	M. W. DICKERSON, M. D.
Prosector of Surgery, - - - - -	HENRY GIBBONS, M. D.
	RICHARD BURR, M. D.

Fee for the full Course, - - - - -	\$ 54 00
Matriculation Fee, only once paid, - - - - -	5 00
Graduation, - - - - -	30 00
Fee for those who have attended two full Courses in other Colleges, -	45 00
Dissecting ticket, (optional,) - - - - -	10 00
Perpetual Ticket, - - - - -	150 00

The fee for the respective Tickets may be paid to each member of Faculty, or the whole amount may be paid to the Dean, who will issue a certificate which will entitle the student to the ticket of each Professor.

To increase the means of acquiring a practical knowledge, of the profession, full course candidates for graduation will be furnished with the Hospital ticket without charge; in addition to which Clinical instruction will be given at the College from twelve to two o'clock on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

The Course in practical Anatomy will be commenced on the 1st of March, and be continued as long as the weather will permit. During the Session a recapitulatory course of Lectures will be given by the Adjunct Professor of Anatomy.

For further information inquire of

JAMES McCLINTOCK, M. D., DEAN,

No. 1 N. Eleventh Street, east side, first house north of Market St.

*Philadelphia, December, 1848.*





